



RIGHT TO INFORMATION TRAINING

*For Government &
Public Officials
(Supply Side)*

A COURSE GUIDE

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Course Overview

The right to information (RTI) is internationally recognised as a human right which is critical to democratic and accountable government. Some of the benefits of the effective enforcement of the right to information are citizen participation and an informed populace; the building of trust in government by preventing false rumours from spreading through the dissemination of true and reliable official information; and the combating of corruption and promotion of effective and efficient governance.

This online course is targeted at African public officials who are tasked with implementing an RTI law, and particularly at those who are involved in receiving, processing and responding to RTI requests, as well as oversight of such requests. It is also aimed at building the capacity of African users of RTI systems, such as members of civil society, journalists and private citizens to take full advantage of the right to information, in accordance with local legislation on this right. The course also seeks to raise awareness about the significance of the right to information, which is a fundamental human right.

Although the specific legal parameters vary significantly from country to country, this course aims to set a normative standard for how to carry out these responsibilities in line with international human rights standards. In implementing an RTI law, public officials should bear in mind that they are giving substance to a key human right, and should undertake this process with the attention, care and diligence that this implies. The course also serves as:

1. A reference/information tool for training officials in Africa on the right to information;
2. A tool for training of trainers (ToTs) on the right to information; and
3. A guide for ToTs on training methodologies and approaches.

Training objectives

The objectives of this training are to:

- Increase participants' knowledge of the right to information
- Develop participants' capacity to implement the right to information within their own public authorities
- Promote a better understanding among participants of how the right to information is beneficial to both citizens and public authorities; and
- Reduce official opposition to implementing the right to information.

Structure of the course

This course is structured as follows:

- Introduction
- Module 1: Introduction to the Right to Information
- Module 2: The Legal Framework for the Right to Information
- Module 3: Overview of Implementation
- Module 4: Proactive and Reactive Disclosure
- Module 5: Interpreting Exceptions
- Evaluation

Each module explores various themes connected to RTI implementation and accompanying instructions on how to engage with the material. Each module is divided into different activities with defined topics, aims and tasks. Activities include moderator and expert videos, exercises/games, reading material, useful RTI resources, discussion forums, and quizzes.

The content is designed to impart content that helps allow participants to actively engage in the discussion forums that take place in all modules.

Only when all necessary tasks for each activity in each module are completed can participants move on to the next module. At the end of each module, participants will be required to pass a quiz, scoring at least 80% (three tries will be allowed), to move onto the next module. At the end of the course, participants will be asked to evaluate it to assist with continuous improvement of this and future courses.

What is expected from you?

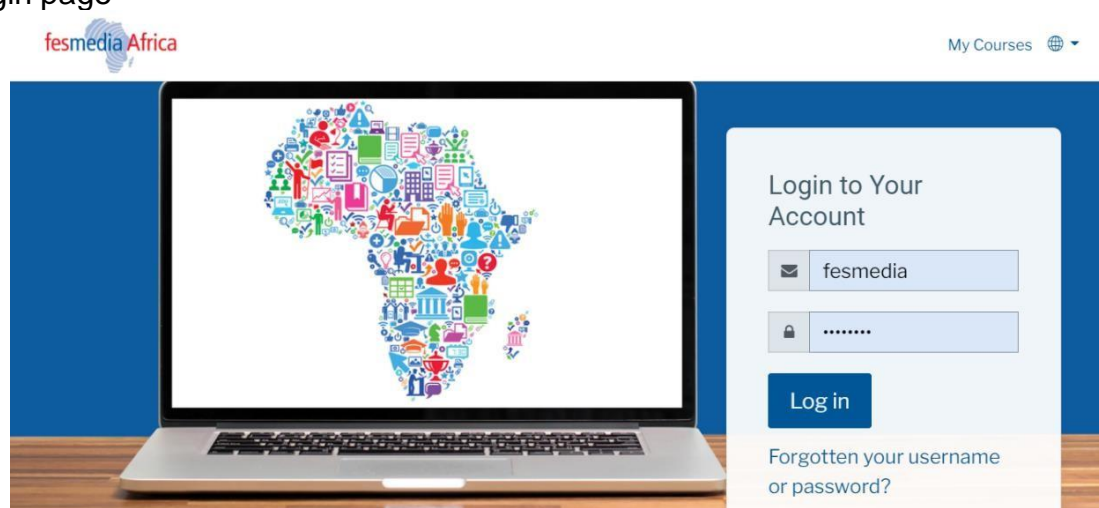
The following is expected from you to ensure productive engagement of all participants:

- To approach the subject matter with an open mind;
- To commit to begin and complete the course within the allocated time frame and to communicate with the course organisers when problems are encountered;
- To interact with fellow participants in a respectful and egalitarian manner; and
- To maintain a focus on the relevant issues.

Accessing the Online course

To access the course, participants should go to the following link <https://fesmedia.scholarlms.com>. Here you need to create your free account and you will receive via email your username and password.

Login page



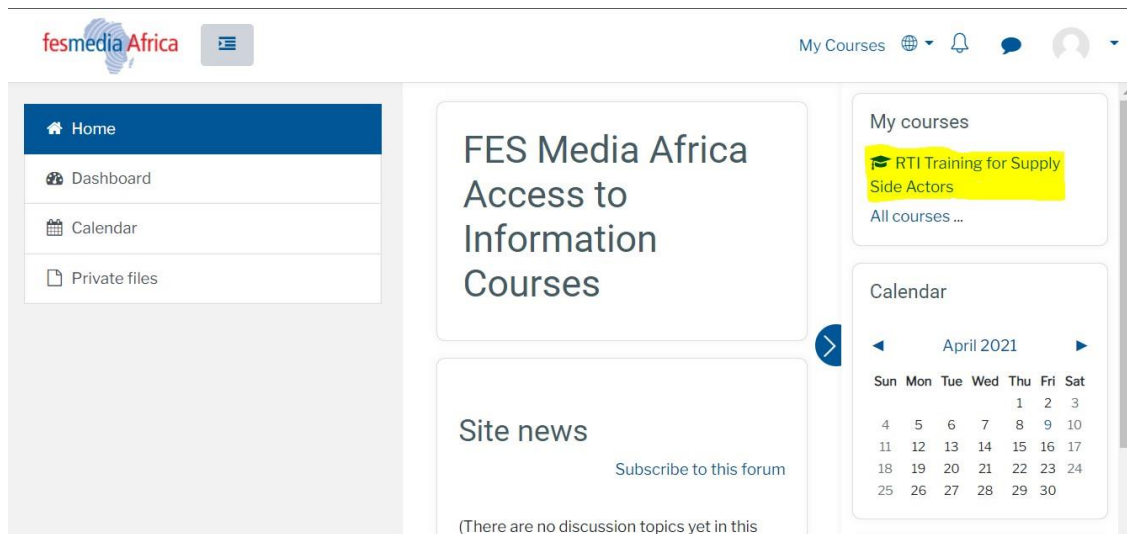
Once URL has been copied and pasted into the search engine the above page should appear, take the following steps to login:

Step 1: Enter your username (as sent via email) on the envelope icon.

Step 2: Enter your password (as sent via email) on the login.

Step 3: click on 'Log In' once the above credentials have been entered.

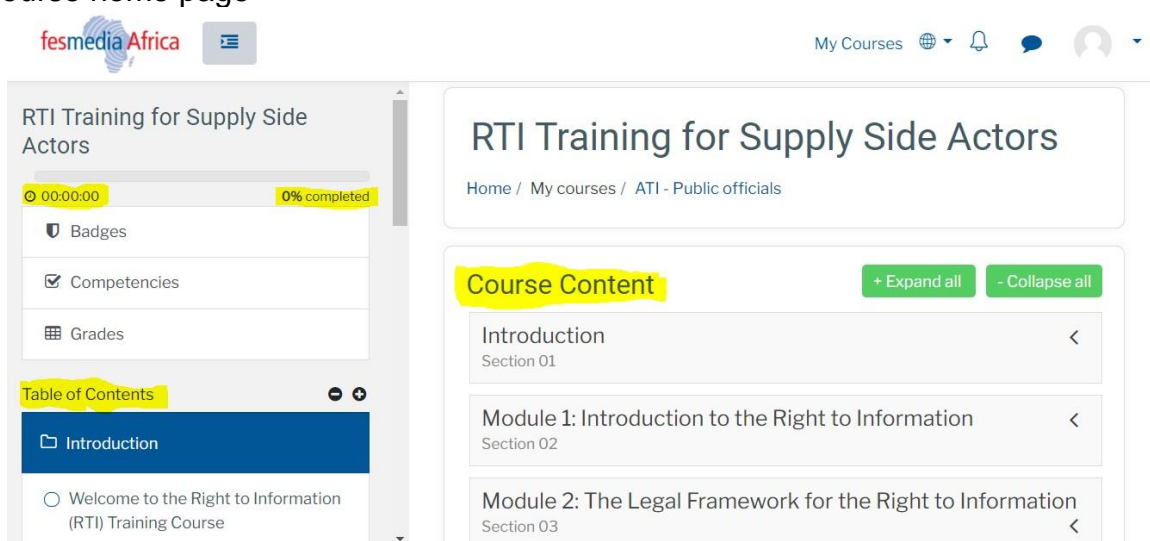
Home Page



The above home page will appear. One on the home page you will notice the following:

1. A profile icon with a downward pointing arrow next to it. This is your profile where you can edit your personal details.
2. Next to the profile icon is a message icon, this icon will show next to it the number of messages you have. The messages may come from course administrators or fellow course participants. You can use this icon to check messages sent to you and to send messages to other participants in the course as well as course administrators, experts and moderators.
3. Next to the messages icon you will find a bell icon this will show any announcements as posted by the course administrators.
4. In order to access the course, you are enrolled in, on the right and side of the homepage you will see "My courses" this will have a list of all course you are enrolled in this case either **RTI Training for Supply Side** or **RTI Training for Demand side**.

Course home page



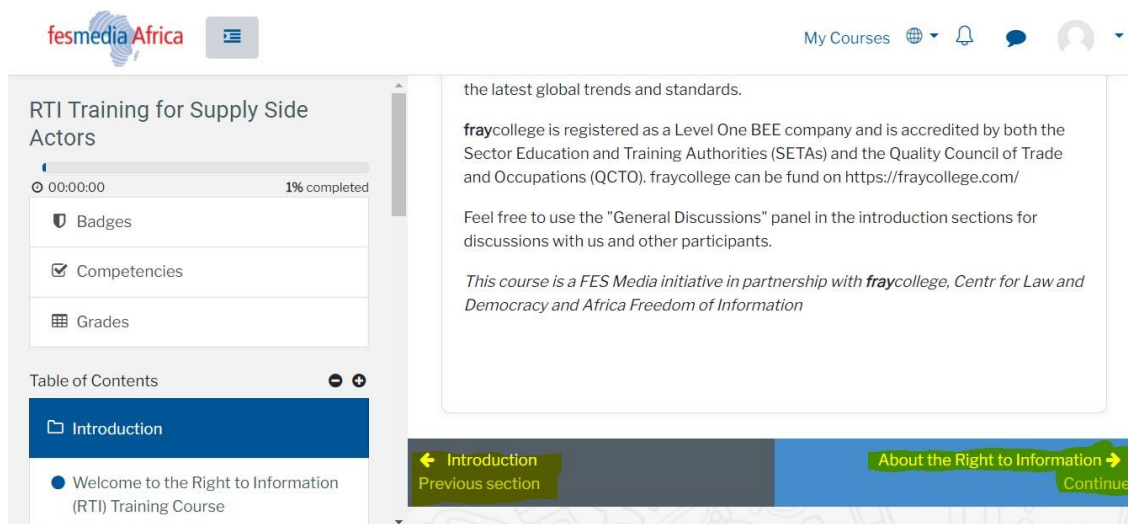
The course homepage has several things to look out for, these include:

1. On the left side of the course home page is a progress bar, this will show you your progress in the course and the amount of time you have spent in the course.
2. Further down on the left side, you will see a table of contents. The table of contents shows

you the course modules and what each module entails.

3. In the middle of the course home page, you will see the course content, this is where you access the course module. Remember the modules work in a chronological order, therefore you will have to start with the introduction section before moving on to module one and with module one before moving onto module two.

Introduction



Above is the introduction section of the course. The Introduction section of the course entails the following:

1. Welcome to the Right to Information (RTI) Training Course - this section gives you a brief introduction to the course, how it was put together and introduces you to sponsors and co-sponsors of the course.
2. About the Right to Information – this section gives you a summary of the right to information.
3. Course experts and moderators – this section features short bios of all course moderators and experts.
4. About this course – this section is a critical guideline to completing the course.
5. Glossary – features several terms and definitions which will be used throughout the course.
6. Introduce yourself discussion forum – this forum encourages participants to network by introducing themselves to one another.
7. Announcements – this section will entail any course announcements posted by the course administrators.
8. General discussions forum – in this forum participants are encouraged to discuss any other course matter related to this training that may not have been discussed in the various modules.

Course Content

The course entails the following learning tools:

1. Expert and moderator videos (shown below)

These videos are recorded by course experts and moderators and give a synopsis of the module topics.

The screenshot shows the fesmedia Africa website interface. On the left, a 'Table of Contents' sidebar lists: Introduction, Module 1: Introduction to the Right to Information (highlighted), Video: Introduction to Human Rights and the Right to Information, Discussion: Practical Challenges Participants Have Faced in Giving Effect to the Right to Information, Exercise: Benefits of the Right to Information, and Reading Material - Note on the Right to Information. The main content area displays a video player titled 'Video: Introduction to Human Rights and the Right to Information'. The video is from 'Module 1_Moderator Video_Introduction to Human Ri...' and features a woman speaking. A 'Copy link' button is visible in the top right of the video player.

2. Discussion forums

Discussion forums are there to enhance engagement between fellow participants, course experts and course moderators. Each discussion forum focus on the module topic.

The screenshot shows the fesmedia Africa website interface. On the left, the 'Table of Contents' sidebar is visible, with 'Discussion: Practical Challenges Participants Have Faced in Giving Effect to the Right to Information' highlighted. The main content area displays a discussion forum titled 'Discussion: Practical Challenges Participants Have Faced in Giving Effect to the Right to Information'. Below the title, it says 'Practical challenges faced in giving effect to the Right to Information'. There is a 'Settings' gear icon. A dropdown menu shows 'Display replies in nested form'. A post by 'Lis Jordan' is visible, titled 'Practical challenges faced in giving effect to the Right to Information' and dated 'Wednesday, February 17, 2021, 4:06 AM'. The post content begins with 'Having completed the introduction to the right for information and learned about what this right is and how it is a human right under international law,'.

3. Interactive games

These games are there to encourage learning and to ensure that participants learn the content in an engaging way. Clear instructions are given on how the games are to be played.

The screenshot shows the fesmedia Africa website interface. The main content area displays an interactive game titled 'Exercise: Benefits of the Right to Information'. The instructions read: 'Below is a list of some possible benefits of the right to information. Can you drag and drop them with the persons who are most likely to receive that benefit (each actor may receive multiple benefits but we are looking for the one most likely to receive the benefit)?'. The game is titled 'Drag and match'. On the left, there are four numbered items: 1. Expose corruption and human rights violations - [blue box], 2. Strengthen sustainable development in the country - [blue box], 3. Identify what private information the government holds about themselves - [blue box], and 4. Discover details about contracting or other procedures that may favour larger companies - [blue box]. On the right, there is a list of actors in grey boxes: Journalists, Civil society organisations, Communities impacted by a development project, Researchers, Environmental campaigners, Individual citizens, Small businesses, and Lawyers.

4. Reading material

This is written content in form of a book. The content here is also reiterated in the module videos.

The screenshot shows the fesmedia Africa LMS interface. On the left, a sidebar contains a progress bar for 'RTI Training for Supply Side Actors' (8% completed), a 'Table of Contents' with 'Module 1: Introduction to the Right to Information' selected, and a list of activities including 'Video: Introduction to Human Rights and the Right to Information' and 'Discussion: Practical Challenges'. The main content area is titled 'Reading Material – Note on the Benefits to the Right to Information' and features a cartoon illustration of a person reading. A 'Table of contents' sidebar on the right lists '1. Seven key benefits that flow from a strong right to information' with sub-points: 1.1. Fighting Corruption, 1.2. Democracy and Participation, 1.3. Accountability, 1.4. Dignity and Personal Goals, 1.5. Economic Development, 1.6. Respect for Human Rights, and 1.7. Sound Development.

5. Additional readings and resources

These resources can be used for further reading to improve the knowledge of participants on the subject matter.

The screenshot shows the 'Additional reading and resources' section of the fesmedia Africa LMS. The sidebar on the left is identical to the previous screenshot. The main content area is titled 'Additional reading and resources' and includes a paragraph: 'Before you tackle the module quiz, see below additional reading material and resources to deepen your understanding of the module content'. Below this, a list of resources is provided: FOIANet, a comparative legal survey on RTI laws, a website with news on RTI issues, a website with RTI laws and legal information, a website hosting the RTI Rating, and a website hosting the RTI Evaluation. At the bottom, a navigation bar shows 'Resources' with a 'Go back' button and 'Module 1: Quiz' with a 'Continue' button.

6. Module quizzes

At the end of each module, there is a module quiz, these module quizzes need to be passed with 80% or higher in order for participants to move on to the next module.

